

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by US Pat. 5,851,186 (Wood et al.) which is commonly assigned with the present application. Claim 1 describes a distributed ultrasound diagnostics network for diagnosing the functionality of an ultrasound system comprising a plurality of diagnostics computers for diagnosing the functionality of an ultrasound system containing ultrasound system functionality diagnostics software which are operated by servicepersons to download ultrasound system functionality diagnostic information from ultrasound systems; and a central diagnostics location with which said diagnostics computers periodically communicate to transfer said ultrasound system functionality diagnostic information, whereby said central diagnostic location is a repository for ultrasound system repair, maintenance, or quality improvement diagnostic information obtained by said diagnostic computers from a plurality of ultrasound systems. This invention comprehends a two-level ultrasound diagnostic network: a first level of diagnostic computers which communicate directly with ultrasound systems and download diagnostic information from them; and a central diagnostics location with which the diagnostic computers communicate to periodically transfer the diagnostics information they have acquired from ultrasound systems. Such a systems allows the diagnostic computers to be extremely mobile, such as laptop diagnostic computers of service personnel, which operate independently to acquire diagnostic information from ultrasound systems but later communicate this information to a central repository where it can be aggregated to be useful for improvements such as developing new diagnostic techniques or quality improvement measures.

The Examiner cites the passage in Wood et al. from col. 10, line 10 to col. 11, line 28 as showing the same thing. In fact, it is seen that the Wood et al. patent only comprehends a single level of control. The passage first discusses a "remote terminal" which is in communication with an ultrasound system to operate it or download information such as test and error logs. In the latter portion of the passage the terminal is said to be a laptop computer which, when carried to the ultrasound system by a serviceperson, can be connected directly to the ultrasound system's network connection to perform the same functions. Nowhere in the passage is a central repository envisioned with which the remote terminals or laptop computers would communicate. The benefits of

aggregating diagnostic information are not realized by the Wood et al. arrangement of one computer or terminal communicating with one ultrasound system, either remotely or on-site. Accordingly it is respectfully submitted that Claim 1 and its dependent Claims 2-7 are not anticipated by Wood et al.

Claim 7 was deemed allowable if rewritten in independent form. However, since Claim 1 has now been shown to be patentable, Claim 7 should now be allowable in its present dependent form.

In view of the foregoing remarks it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1-7 are not anticipated by Wood et al. Accordingly it is respectfully requested that the rejection of Claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and the objection to Claim 7 be withdrawn.

In light of the foregoing amendment and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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